

~~Elmina~~

Elmina, Sept 15.

'80

My Dear Aldrich:

Thank You ever
so much for the book
— I had already fin-
ished it, & prodigiously
enjoyed it, in the pe-
riodical of the notorious
Howells, but it hits Mrs.
Clemens just right, for
she is having a reading-
holiday, now, for the

first time in some months; so between-times, when the ~~the~~ new baby is asleep & strengthening up for another attempt to ^{take} possession of this place, she is going to read it. Her strong friendship for you makes her think she is going to like it.

I finished a story yesterday, myself. I counted up & found

it between sixty & Eighty
thousand words — about
the size of your book.

It is for boys & girls —
been at work at it several
years, off & on.

I hope Howells is
enjoying his journey to the
Pacific. He wrote me that
you & Asquith were going,
also, but I doubted it,
~~expecting him to~~
believing he was in liquor
when he wrote it. In my
opinion, this univer-
sal applause over his

book is going to land
that man in a Retreat
inside of two months.

Is he bloated much? -

I notice the papers say
mighty fine things about
your book, too. You
ought to try to get into
the same establish-
ment with Howells;
it would be ever so much
more cheery than suck-
ing bay rum & make-
believe forty-rod out of a

Sugar-teat in solitude.
 But applause does not
 affect me — I am al-
 ways calm — this is
 because I am used to
 it.

Well, good-bye, my
 boy, & good luck to you.
 Mrs Clemens asks me to
 send ~~her~~ ^{her} warmest regards
 to you & Mrs Aldrich —
 which I do, & add those of
 Yours Ever
 Mark.